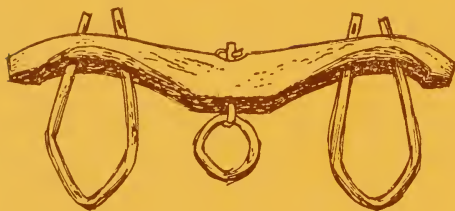


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Dedication Addresses For The F. Ray
Risdon Lincoln Collection

LINCOLN ROOM



UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS
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Collection

DEDICATION
ADDRESSES
FOR THE
F. RAY RISDON
LINCOLN
COLLECTION



OCCIDENTAL COLLEGE LIBRARY

April 15, 1957

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Lincoln Room

WHAT MAKES LINCOLNISTS?

by

RALPH G. LINDSTROM



LINCOLNISTS seek not to have him overshadow Washington, Jefferson, Franklin and others who tower in our history. Rather, they see in Lincoln a man to whom our federal civic system rose to the sublimity of a "religious mysticism," to quote Alexander Stephens. They see in Lincoln the epitome of American civics—as President Eisenhower sees him.

Two score and seven years ago F. Ray Risdon conceived the idea of a Lincoln library, dedicating himself to the proposition that to know the life and life-purpose of Abraham Lincoln is to *understand* better and be better prepared to *preserve* our Federal Union, which Lincoln gave the "last full measure of devotion" to save.

We are met to dedicate the F. Ray Risdon Lincoln Collection. But in a larger sense, we cannot dedicate, we cannot consecrate a Lincoln Library. It is rather for us, as a living Occidental College community, and as part of the Los Angeles civic community, to be here dedicated to the maintenance and study of this Risdon Lincoln Collection, that Lincoln may still live in our midst.

If we, and other Americans, are thus dedicated, yes, thus

consecrated, to study, understanding and emulation of Lincolnian civics, then this nation and other free nations "conceived in liberty and dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal" shall "long endure."

We are met at a time of increasing intensity in a world-wide battle for the minds and hearts of men. We are engaged in this battle for the minds and hearts of men, testing whether the nation of Lincoln—"or any nation so conceived and so dedicated, can long endure?" We *may* even be testing whether this very civilization—yes, whether man on this planet "can long endure?"

We are met at a time when the world needs, desperately needs uncluttered and unpretending and unsophisticated minds; when we need sound hearts, simple logic, prayerful willingness to accept and act upon the logic of events as Lincoln did. We are met at a time when the world acutely needs the civic good manners of government with genuine consent of the governed. Lincoln's life is the achieved epitome of all these qualities and purposes.

If Lincoln lives in our hearts and our minds and in our civics, America is safe. If we merely memorialize Lincoln in beautiful but lifeless monuments, then Lincoln is dead to us, and America is dying. What makes Lincolnists? The realization that without emulation we embalm his life in a dead past.

What makes Lincolnists? This is the glad season of Easter, of renewal, of resurrection. Lincolnists are made by the deep desire that the Lincoln life shall not be dead to us; that he shall live, generation after generation, in the minds and hearts, in the civic consciousness of what Lincoln called "the whole great family of man."

The need was great before. But now we live in a nuclear age and are moving into an era of solar energy. Progress beyond most imaginations, or utter destruction, are the alternatives of today. We must achieve mastery of ourselves or our mastery of forces will become the instrument of total destruction.

What makes Lincolnists? The voice of Lincoln warning that “we shall nobly save, or meanly lose, the last best hope of earth.”

What makes Lincolnists? The realization that this time of crisis and opportunity requires big men, yet simple men, Lincolnesque men, men willing to be “dedicated to the great task remaining before us,” men who will “highly resolve” that Lincoln “shall not have [lived] in vain”—“that this nation, under God, shall have a new birth of freedom—and that government of the people, by the people, for the people, shall not perish from [but shall be extended to all] the earth.”

Lincolnists love Lincoln—they become Lincolnists because they would not slip supinely into oblivion, because they would see man go on into what Lincoln called “man’s vast future.”

THE F. RAY RISDON COLLECTION
ITS SIGNIFICANCE TO OCCIDENTAL
AND TO THE NATION

by JAY MONAGHAN



EIGHTEEN YEARS AGO I first saw the F. Ray Risdon Collection and spent several days with it. This was the beginning of a long friendship with Ray in which I have watched this collection slowly fill the spare bedroom in his house until the door could not be opened. In that predicament Ray began filling the garage. As Ray collected, he called my attention to several rare Lincoln books which otherwise would have escaped me. For years we corresponded and I treasure that friendship. Truly, Ray Risdon absorbed much of the character of the great man he admired. Those of you who know Ray, know that he is slim in stature and I shall always remember one late afternoon, when his shadow stretched out along the sidewalk ahead of us. Ray's shadow needed only a stovepipe hat to make it Lincolnian. I know no finer tribute to pay him.

My first visit to the Risdon Collection was at the end of a trip down the coast from Seattle, inspecting private Lincoln collections. There was a good one up in Washington, and in the bay area there were at least two. The Watchorn collection at Redlands was, and still is, most exquisitely housed. The Huntington

Library—hardly a private collection—contains the rarest books and manuscripts. But of all the privately owned collections two stood above the rest. These were the Wyles Collection in Santa Barbara and the Risdon Collection which we now have here. As you know, the Wyles Collection was deeded to the University of California and is now on the new Santa Barbara College campus. It is a great pleasure to see the Risdon Collection as part of the Occidental College Library. I know this must give great satisfaction to Ralph Linstrom who did so much to get it here, and to Miss Elizabeth McCloy who has seen it installed before she retires from her long and constructive service as librarian. Also to Justin Turner, Sir Knight of the Civil War Round Table, part of whose own collection of priceless Lincoln documents are on exhibition in the library here.

These great collections belong in our institutions of higher learning where they may influence future generations. How this influence may be exerted is the immediate problem before us. All educators know that you can lead an ass to knowledge but you can't make him think. Or, in the more prolix wording of the popularizers of natural science: the first man came down out of the trees, lost his tail, and learned to walk upright. The fact that his thumb could be opposed to his other four fingers gave him an advantage over all the apes, for he alone could grasp a weapon, a pen, or manipulate a machine. He grew a brain infinitely bigger than that possessed by any of the animals but in spite of all his advantages, that brain, large as it is, is still incapable of controlling his own irrational behavior. Perhaps, by studying the patient and far-seeing Lincoln—who you remember was called an ape by his Secretary of War—we can partially attain the necessary self-control.

The responsibility for a constructive use of this Risdon Collection certainly rests on the faculty and friends of this library—especially Mrs. Stuart Chevalier, Chairman of the Library Patrons, and Dr. Arthur Gardiner Coons whose foot is on the

College's accelerator. And who, I might add, as president, must be used to exorbitant demands.

I come from another college and I know the problem of guiding students toward a repository of this kind. Books alone will not make scholars. I have watched a few of our great Lincoln collections in their university homes. For fourteen years I lived quite close to the collections at Indiana University, the University of Chicago, and the University of Illinois. These institutions house the Oakleaf, the Barton, and the Horner Collections, respectively. There is little basic difference between the three but there is a great deal of difference in the number of outstanding Lincoln scholars who have come from the University of Illinois as compared to the other two institutions. This difference is too great to attribute to chance. Most likely it is due to one man, the late Professor J. G. Randall whose own Lincoln books are classics in the field and whose ability to produce outstanding scholars gives him top rank as an educator.

None of us are unrealistic enough to believe that students, with all their required courses and extracurricular activities will come voluntarily to search for the philosophy imbedded in these shelves. If we expect that, of our students we are courting disappointment—and we'll surely get "yes" for an answer. First and foremost, the faculty must assign students problems to be solved with the material here. That, of course, cannot be done unless the professors themselves have a special interest in the subject. Now you see why I put the burden on President Coons. Occidental is fortunate in having Dean Dumke and Professor Rolle in the 19th Century American history field, so we can expect much from the History Department here. However, a Lincoln collection is much bigger than any Department of History. At Santa Barbara I have been pleasantly surprised to note the interest in our collection shown by members of other departments—including, of all surprises, biology. Certainly it is a mistake to restrict such a library as this to the History Department alone.

There is as much source material here on political science as there is on history—and the political scientists have made much less use of it. We Americans proclaim a democracy to be the best form of government—the solution of all political frustrations. Yet the Civil War is an eternal example of how our democracy broke down. Let us never forget that fact. Let us hope that we will always profit from that mistake. We hear much nowadays about the importance of upholding a democratic world. There is no question in our minds but that the democratic way is the best and most enduring way. We are apt to forget that democracies have been experimented with throughout the ages and they have usually failed. This does not mean that ours will fail, but it *does* mean that just because we have a democracy it is bound to succeed. So far in our history we, the United States have been colonies longer than we have been an independent nation. Figure it out for yourselves: Not until 1965 will the United States have existed as long as we were colonies. Certainly we are still in the experimental stage of government and all that can be discovered about our past, especially the lamentable breakdown in our democracy which we call the Civil War, may help to prevent another collapse.

Lincoln is remembered as the savior of the Union, the savior of our democracy. Yet there are scholars, and careful ones, who maintain that had Lincoln acted differently at certain crises, he might have prevented the Civil War. The books in this collection expounding that thesis are quite interesting. But more interesting still is the fact that the American people will not accept such conclusions no matter how skilled the writer or how ingeniously he has presented his case. Americans are simply not willing to admit that Lincoln could be wrong. The sophists would delight in this practical demonstration of the inconstancy of abstract truth. Yes, beginning students of philosophy can find countless arresting examples in this collection.

I should add that I have found one group of people—not

counting unreconstructed Southerners, of course—who tend to question Lincoln's omnipotence. This group consists of the more alert members of the freshman class and it is an encouraging sign. This may mean that they have been bottle-fed on too much Lincoln, but I prefer to attribute it to youth's initiative and desire to think for itself. It is even more encouraging to notice that by the time these youngsters are seniors most of them have changed their minds. The importance of having a student come to his own conclusion in his own due time was first brought home to me by Professor J. Russell Smith at the University of Pennsylvania many years ago. And I should add that J. Russell Smith had then among his possessions, a cane made from a fence-rail allegedly split by Honest Abe. Any relation between these two facts is purely incidental.

All this is just another way of saying that the Departments of History and Political Science are not the only ones which should be attracted to this collection. At Santa Barbara I have been pleased to notice that the Department of Speech makes as much use of our Lincoln collection as any other department, excepting only History. This was a surprise to me and it shows an alert and imaginative faculty. Certainly students of oratory, logical speaking, debate, and declamation, will find a great deal in the speeches and the expressions of Lincoln and his contemporaries which influenced the people of America to risk their lives in a civil war. Not only is the finest spoken English to be found in some of the volumes in these Lincoln collections, but students of it can note the singular effect this language had on the people who heard and read it. It is remarkable to notice how much of the language and thoughts of those days a century ago, have become clichés of every present-day political campaign. I am constantly surprised to hear, from candidates of both parties, whole phrases lifted from Lincoln again and again. I'm sure that they do not know they are quoting Lincoln. I'm not always sure that they even know who Lincoln was. I sometimes fear they think he was

an automobile, but no matter, when they talk politics they use Lincoln's words—and get elected. Sometimes!!

Think of the opportunity of the English Department in studying a Lincoln collection. I know in my own student days I wanted to take English as a minor for my history major. I still believe that English is perhaps the most important minor for history but I was not permitted to do so. Such a rule is certainly unusual now, and Occidental surely does not have it, for English, both in grammar and in composition, is the secret of the best writing of history. Let us look at Lincoln's own use of words to notice his magic touch. He told us that we have "government of the people, by the people, for the people." Everybody can repeat this and I dare say that if they do not remember anything else Lincoln said, they know this. Yet the idea in this phrase was not original with Lincoln. It is the way he said it—not a word too long, not a word too short—which makes it stick in our minds.

Lincoln undoubtedly got this phrase from Theodore Parker who used it several times in a slightly different form in his Boston lectures and that slight difference explains Lincoln's power with words. According to Parker, "Democracy is direct self-government of all the people, by all the people, for all the people." Note the flabby tissue in the idea as Parker expressed it?

Lincoln's law partner, William H. Herndon, visited Parker in Boston and he brought back some of Parker's printed speeches. Herndon tells us that Lincoln read them and with his pencil drew a circle around the famous phrase. Evidently it impressed Lincoln but before using it he tightened the sentence and cut away the fat. Of course, this definition of a democracy was not original with Parker. In 1830 Webster referred to our body politic as: "The people's government, made for the people, made by the people, and answerable to the people." Again it is plain to see how Lincoln sharpened the phrase until it has stuck in our minds.

It is little things like this which make me say that our English

Departments may profit tremendously by directing students to observe the strong simplicity of language used by Lincoln. And let's not forget that this easy flowing, muscular language did not come naturally to Lincoln. He learned it from long study and practice. If you question this, I ask you only to read some of the flowery verbiage he used in his early days of politicking.

Not only in the use and arrangement of words may English classes profit from a study of Lincoln's use of our language but they may learn much of the structure of good composition by noting how our best writers have handled the Lincoln story. From other accounts they may learn how *not* to do it. You have all noticed that one writer can tell a story so that everybody remembers it. Another tells the same story and everybody goes to sleep. Every good teacher knows this only too well. Personally, I shall always remember a statement of Robert Glass Cleland's. (A building on this campus bears his name.) He said, "I am a believer in writing history so people will read it."

This is certainly a revolutionary statement from a great scholar. You all know many—too many—professional historians who write for each other and look with illy concealed contempt on the so-called "general reader." This is unfortunate, for in a democracy the "general reader" is important and the "general reader" wants history. That has been made plain to us again and again. Notice how promoters of historical fiction from Ben Ames Williams *House Divided* to the latest motion picture, *Ten Commandments*, all take pains to tell us that extensive research has been done to assure accuracy. This popular synthetic history is sure to continue as long as trained historians stand aloof, while untrained hack-writers feed the public what is often very bad history. That's why it seems so important for English—and journalism too—to be acceptable minors for history majors. We all know that beginners must learn their own style. They usually learn it by trial and error, by constant practice, and by study. They also learn, sometimes unconsciously, by reading other

writers' stories. I remember hearing Carl Sandburg say in his beginning days, "I read Flaubert last night. Some situations in *Madam Bovary* are handled in a way that seems suitable for some of the situations in the life of Lincoln which I'm writing."

That life of Lincoln by Sandburg, *The Prairie Years*, became one of the best sellers of the Twentieth Century. Not only was it read by the general public, but it started a wave of books about Lincoln which persisted for a generation—all of them here, I believe in this Risdon Collection. This is a great compliment to Carl Sandburg but in one way it may have been a disservice to the Lincoln theme. The multitude of books written after Sandburg's volumes frightens students away from Lincoln. The task of mastering such a library seems a dismaying impossibility. However, there is a key in this Risdon Collection—a little book—which will be invaluable to beginners. This key is a list by Paul M. Angle of all books written before 1946 which he considered essential to an understanding of all that is positively known about Abraham Lincoln. This list contains only 81 books out of the five thousand which have been written. Let us estimate that nineteen additional important Lincoln books have been written since 1946. This leaves us 4,900 books which have been considered unimportant—a tremendous percentage certainly. Many of these are accurate but they contain nothing new or original and therefore seem unimportant.

Such a vast accumulation of unimportant books reminds us of Lincoln's own observation during the famous *Effie Afton* Case, in which he was an attorney for the defense. That case, you remember, was a mile-stone in the contest between water and rail transportation. The steamboat, *Effie Afton*, had struck a railroad bridge spanning the Mississippi. If the court held that the railroad line was liable for obstructing river traffic the decision might hinder railroad development in America. Both sides employed good lawyers, who made great speeches but the jury was unconvinced. Finally Lincoln left the courtroom and

walked out on the bridge to see the situation for himself. He talked to a fisherman sitting on the bridge and learned a few things firsthand which made him remark, "It is good to be out here where there is so much fact and so little opinion." For facts about Lincoln then, and not opinion, Paul Angle's list of essential books is basic.

The Lincoln who emerges from the essential books may not be perfection but he is certainly a fascinating figure. He needs no garments of opinion. The plot of his life corresponds with one of the oldest of our folk-tales, the story of the ugly duckling, the fledgling that struggled through life and eventually looked at his reflection and beheld the magnificent swan. Oscar Wilde tried this story in reverse in his picture of Dorian Gray which was all right for the segment of Nineteenth Century readers to whom it was addressed but the plot has not held popular favor like the simpler and older story.

There is irony certainly in the fact that a civil war gave us our greatest humane character—a man remembered for his tolerance, sympathy and patience. The countless stories of Lincoln's kindness to animals—some of them true, some false—are known to everybody. The Risdon Collection is full of both the true and the false and let's hope some scholarly student will weed the quack-grass from the ivy. But because some of the stories may not be true, they are none the less valuable as examples of what people think Lincoln was like. And this brings us to consider the importance of the non-important Lincoln books. If we discarded all books from our libraries which failed to meet some definition of "importance" I suspect we would throw out most of our literature. By the same token, the books not essential to an understanding of Lincoln may be excellent literature. Certainly they are essential to an understanding of the American mind.

I would like to go one step farther and defend the admittedly bad Lincoln books—and they are legion. Some are vacuous eulogies, some down-right vicious falsehoods perpetrated for

special interests. A study of the ulterior motives behind some of these books might be very helpful in attaining a knowledge of ourselves, if not of Lincoln. I discussed the inclusion of these books in the collection with Ray Risdon and I think we agreed on the nature of their importance. No one was quicker than he to detect sham, to differentiate between the genuine solid ivory of true Lincoln interpretation and a plastic copy. But the people who have tried to take advantage of Lincoln's name are sometimes important in our civilization. We cannot do without politicians, idealists, cultists, and propagandists. They are both good and bad according to our lights. Surely it is essential for our young people to learn how Lincoln has been distorted to suit special interests, fads and beliefs.

Some of these distorters are sincerely unable to see the true Lincoln. Others, I fear, know better but are not quite honest even with themselves. For example, during my years at the Illinois State Historical Library the newly elected Socialist mayor of Milwaukee came down to consult our books. He was sure that socialism was the only salvation of mankind. He was also sure that Abraham Lincoln was the greatest of all Americans. Therefore, he was sure, and wanted to prove, that Lincoln was a socialist—a nice bit of logic. He worked hard in the library for two days. Then, before returning to Milwaukee he came to me and said, "I can't find anything which makes me believe that Lincoln was a Socialist."

He was an honest man: and I admired him for it. Too many others have used the name of Lincoln the way jugglers and professional dancers sometimes use the American flag in their acts. They have found that they can always get applause whenever the top man on the human pyramid or the girl in shorts has the band blare a patriotic air while an American flag is waved.

Some states have passed laws against this artificial stimulant to thespian approval. Sometimes I wish that such a prohibition

might be enacted against writers who use Lincoln for such ulterior reasons. This Risdon Collection, like all the good ones, is full of examples of this. There is a pamphlet here by an author who was much opposed to birth control. He evidently had convinced himself so thoroughly that birth control was wrong, that he considered it all right to state that Jesus and Lincoln were two babies *not* wanted by their parents. Perhaps the Dead Sea scrolls will reveal that Jesus was not wanted. Certainly the Kentucky records disclose enough about baby Abraham's life to make us believe that he was very much welcomed. We even know some of the toys his father bought for him. Where did that author get his "not wanted" nonsense?

As I said, and Miss McCloy knows only too well, this and all good Lincoln collections, are full of books and pamphlets written by writers who were willing to distort the Lincoln story to suit their imagination of what was good for their readers. Lincoln is quoted as being opposed to Wall Street, opposed to the eight-hour day, opposed to cigarettes, even in one case, opposed to a church which the writer evidently did not like. I could go on indefinitely quoting examples of similar abuse of Lincoln's good name, but I can say truthfully, that as yet I have not read that he was opposed to smog. All this waving of Lincoln's name much as jugglers and cheap showmen wave the American flag shows what a really tremendous hold he has on the popular mind.

I said I sometimes wish a law might stop this Lincoln blasphemy. Of course I don't really advocate anything of the kind. Quite the reverse. This accumulated misrepresentation may be the best possible thing for us, especially when stored in a college library for enquiring minds. For, if anywhere, college is the place where students should apply the maxim of Francis Bacon: "Read, not to believe, but to consider." I'm sure you will all agree with me that much trouble in this world comes from people who believe all that they read without considering it.

We know now that the Civil War was brought on largely by

propagandists, fiery orators, and people both North and South, who believed what they read without considering it. In short, the war was fought by a people who were insufficiently educated for democracy. And when the war was over, we Americans were still insufficiently educated for democracy. This explains the waving of the bloody shirt at election-time which influenced our voting for a generation. The solid South still suffers from the results of that old hysteria.

Here is an example of the way political propaganda aroused emotions. Sherman's march to the sea is still one of the episodes of the war which makes unreconstructed Southerners' blood boil. Just why it was worse to burn barns than to kill young men seems hard to understand, but "let us judge not that we be not judged," as Lincoln liked to quote from the Bible. The fact remains that that Louisiana school-teacher, William Tecumseh Sherman, is perhaps the most hated Yankee of the war. Yet strangely enough at the time he made his march across Georgia, the South did not seem to be morally incensed. Of course the people who saw their harvests crackling up in flames and their hen-roosts robbed, did not like it, but the destruction was generally recognized as war. Besides middle-westerners had seen cyclones rip across their best farm lands leaving behind nothing but rubble. Not until 1875 when reconstruction politicians began playing on all the old emotional strings for Southern votes, did Marching through Georgia become an unparalleled crime. In short, it was not the actual destruction but the horrendous oratory of later propagandists that lingers in our minds.

Therefore, the distortions, the diatribes, the historic fallacies which have been perpetrated in Lincoln's name, may be a great blessing, when assembled for study in one collection. I can't help but hope that these bits of distorted history may be a great lesson for students. Certainly the generation which understands fatuous hypocrisy is less apt to be deceived and led astray by it. And until we are sufficiently educated to be no longer fooled by glib

tongues, fast flowing pens, and chattering typewriters, our democracy may not pass its next test. As I said before, our experiment in self-government is still very young.

The present unprecedented interest in the Civil War may be a good omen for it may mean that we are beginning to look seriously at our past mistakes. We have now some forty Civil War Round Tables, including one in London and one in Germany. We have a Civil War Book Club, a Civil War quarterly magazine, a Civil War novel, *Andersonville*, was a book of the month selection, headed the best-seller list for months, and can now be purchased at the corner drug store as a pocket book. To some this seems to be a trend away from Lincoln toward the war. I'm not convinced of this. Perhaps the war is attracting new readers who will eventually find Lincoln. Besides, it is very difficult to separate Lincoln from the Civil War. One of the measures of the magnitude of Lincoln's mind was his profound interest in military strategy. He followed battles closely. To know Lincoln it may be necessary to know these battles just as we must know the books of Euclid which did so much to mould Lincoln's logical thinking. Where, but by studying mathematical theorems, would Lincoln have gotten that famous phrase, "We are dedicated to the *proposition* that all men are created equal?"

In all American history we have never seen anything quite like this Civil War interest. Former enthusiasms for spiritualism, for millerism, for temperance, during the middle of the last century came nearest to it. But none of those social excitements were purely intellectual like the interest in Lincoln and the Civil War. Perhaps the Browning Clubs half a century ago are most similar, but again there is a great difference. Browning societies were largely supported by women and the Lincoln-Civil War organizations are almost exclusively masculine. This speaks well for a growing intellectual capacity in American men—for in the past, you know, publishers have always said that women, not men, buy our books.

To further explain my optimism about the present tendency toward war books let me tell you about a friend of mine. He had three little children who used to hide behind chairs and the sofa to shoot from ambush at callers. His wife's friends asked, "Aren't you afraid to let your children play with wooden guns? Don't you think they may grow up into gangsters?"

"Those little gunmen are in high school now," my friend said. "I can't see that they differ from other children. Certainly they get as good grades."

So let us hope that a sufficient study and understanding of the war may be the best insurance for peace. This juvenile interest in war was demonstrated again recently by the replies to a questionnaire submitted to the Santa Barbara high school. The poll showed that boys liked history better than girls. When questioned further on the subject, one fellow explained his preference by saying, "History is about war and exploration, two things boys understand." That frank chap's statement is worth remembering. If reading about war will interest boys in history, let's encourage them to read it. It may be like putting the nineteenth hole at the church door but that's better than putting it in a tavern. So I'm for it. A knowledge of history is our best protection against the demagogues who have almost wrecked our democracy in the past and may do so again.

Certainly we must have freedom of speech, freedom for a man to say the most foolish things and we must also have enough education to realize how foolish some speakers are. That is up to Occidental and our other colleges. As for me, I hope I am not one of the most foolish speakers when I say that the greatest event of the last century was the fact that our government did survive its civil war, for its survival has influenced all world history since that time. But the cost was tremendous. Our little country of a hundred years ago lost almost as many men in that four and a half years of war, as our big Twentieth Century country lost in the First, and Second World Wars and the

Korean War combined. The grim experience of the Civil War is something we don't want to repeat. But having gone through it, let us be proud of the example our success has had on the world.

Had secession succeeded North America might well be three or four countries today. The Middle-West would in all probability have followed the South out of the Union. Certainly California would have set up a Republic of the Pacific. Read the documents and see how nearly this came to pass, anyway. Then with the United States so divided we might well have followed the Latin-American pattern of dictators and political unrest, with quarrels and wars about boundaries, with some states, like Iowa we'll say, or Maryland, serving as an Ulster.

The struggle to win the war made the United States a nation. It gave us the unity which has insured America's industrial development and has made us the leader of the democratic world with a tremendous influence on every country of the globe. Statesmen of the Nineteenth Century foresaw this. The great English liberal, John Bright, observing our war said, "Privilege has shuddered at what might happen to old Europe if the great experiment [in America] should succeed" His admirers in California named one of the big trees for him in the Calaveras grove on the road to Yosemite.

When *Uncle Tom's Cabin* was published, English liberals lauded it. Its sale in England was tremendous and the landed gentry who controlled parliament were disconcerted. So pronounced was their opposition that when Harriet Beecher Stowe visited England on a lecture tour, Queen Victoria dared not meet her, although she wanted to see the little woman who had caused such a moral stir. Finally the Queen satisfied her royal curiosity by a clever trick. She learned the American woman's traveling schedule and arranged to have the lecturer's train stopped for a change of cars at a station where Her Majesty also alighted on a trip from Balmoral to Windsor. Thus the two

famous women looked each other over, even smiled distantly, and no protocol was violated.

The Queen's Tory supporters had good reason for hoping that the American experiment would fail. They wanted the growing giant overseas to cut itself down to less than their size and remain subservient to them. The speeches in parliament, as well as in the French Chamber of Deputies, are full of such sentiments. Napoleon III and Palmerston both feared that their regimes would topple if the American democracy succeeded. To their dismay it did succeed and we know that Empress Eugenie, when she heard the fatal news, went pale beneath her rouge. England responded to American victory by extending the suffrage and made her own government more democratic.

We can learn, from books in this Risdon Collection, many examples of the way the American war insured the advancement of democracy in Europe. Since that time—almost a hundred years ago—every country which has revolted against autocracy—even Russia under the Tsars—has accompanied its revolution with a biography of Lincoln, the railsplitter who became president. These biographies appear in twenty-three languages, in Persian script, and in Asiatic characters. The bushmen of the African jungles and the Esquimo of the farthest north learn, as they learn about the outside world, the name of Abraham Lincoln. If democracy survives—and it must survive—we can be assured of Lincoln's immortality and with it a continuing interest in the books about him. It is safe to say, then, that we have here in the Risdon Collection the basis of everything which Americans cherish, everything of importance to our way of life. But there remains one great question: Are we sufficiently intelligent to appreciate it.

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